

SECRET [REDACTED]

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

25X1

National Intelligence Council

NIC 05851-85
25 November 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Robert D. Vickers, Jr.
National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT: The Continued Sandinista Military Buildup in Nicaragua

1. On 22 November, I briefed Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead on the continued military buildup in Nicaragua and the threat it represented to regional stability. I was accompanied to the briefing by [REDACTED] Deputy Director of DDI/ALA. The session was also attended by Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs; Frank McNeil, Deputy Assistant Secretary/INR; and William Walker, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central America.

25X1

2. At the conclusion of the briefing, the Deputy Secretary expressed his concern that additional steps needed to be taken to prevent a further buildup, including the potential delivery of sophisticated air defense missiles to Nicaragua. Assistant Secretary Abrams pointed out that the United States had laid down three demarches to the Sandinistas: the first against the delivery of advanced fighter aircraft, the second against the presence of Cuban combat units, and the third against direct support of terrorist acts against US citizens. The Deputy Secretary commented that obviously more had to be done, but that it was difficult to formulate policy measures that would have widespread domestic and international support.

3. I pointed out that a selected quarantine or naval blockade of Nicaragua would be very effective in preventing a further military buildup, particularly if it were targeted against further deliveries of petroleum. A blockade, in conjunction with a strong anti-Sandinista insurgent movement, would put considerable pressure on the Sandinista regime to compromise or risk losing total control of the country.

[REDACTED] 25X1

SECRET [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 25X1

C-387

SECRET

25X1

The Deputy Secretary commented that he believed such a step by the United States would provoke a considerable domestic and international outcry and, therefore, was not politically feasible at this time. Assistant Secretary Abrams commented that we were looking at further steps that could be taken to politically isolate the Sandinista regime and which ultimately may make low risk military actions by the US more acceptable.

4. The scheduled NSC meeting on 10 December will be devoted to the topic of how the US can continue to keep the pressure on Nicaragua.


Robert D. Vickers

cc: DDI
DD/ALA
C/LAD

SECRET

25X1

SECRET

25X1

SUBJECT: The Continued Sandinista Military Buildup
In Nicaragua

NIC 05851-85

DISTRIBUTION:

- 1 - DCI
- 1 - DDCI
- 1 - ER
- 1 - DDI
- 1 - C/LAD
- 1 - DD/ALA
- 1 - NIO/LA

NIO/LA/RVickers//25Nov85

25X1

SECRET

25X1